

# NOTES AND MEMORANDA

## Elections to the Society

The following have been elected Fellows (starred) and Members of the *Eugenics Society* during the past quarter :

Isadore Bloom, Esq.	Mrs. Freeman.
Mrs. H. I. Bayne Chapman.	*Dr. J. L. Gilks.
Stanley Colyer, Esq., M.D., M.R.C.P.	*G. D. Hindley, Esq., M.C., M.A., M.D.
F. E. Daunt, Esq., M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.	Dr. Sharief Usayran.
J. A. Davidson, Esq., M.D., M.B., Ch.B.	W. F. Westbrook, Esq.
	Mrs. Whyte.

## Members' Meetings

THE following Members' Meetings are announced for the coming quarter. It should be noted that the meeting on June 26th will take place at the Rooms of the Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, W.1, and the meeting on May 15th at the Rooms of the Royal Society, Burlington House; in each case by kind permission of the President and Council of the Society concerned.

Tuesday, April 17th, at 5.15 p.m. A Symposium on Birth Control. *Speakers*: Representatives of the National Birth Control Association and the Society for the Provision of Birth Control Clinics.

Tuesday, May 15th, at 5.15 p.m. The Complex Determinants of Amentia. *Speaker*: Lionel S. Penrose, M.A., M.D.

Tuesday, June 26th, at 5.15 p.m. The Inheritance of Educability in the Rat. *Speaker*: Professor F. A. E. Crew, M.D., D.Sc.

The Annual General Meeting will be held on May 15th at the Rooms of the Royal Society at 4.15 p.m., with the lecture following as above announced at 5.15 p.m. At all the meetings the chair will be taken by Sir Humphry Rolleston, Bt., President of the *Eugenics Society*.

## The African Brain

THE *East African Medical Journal* (February 1934), reporting on an address on the African brain delivered by Dr. F. W. Vint at the

Dar-es-Salaam Meeting of the British Medical Association, draws special attention to the scrupulousness with which the lecturer avoided drawing deductions from his anatomical studies. Dr. Vint emphasized the fact that his subjects were normal Africans, not (as had been suggested by a correspondent in *The Times*) a group including idiots, imbeciles and criminals, and that the size and weight of the brain were only a part of the detectable racial differences. The following resolution was carried unanimously :

That this meeting of the East African branches of the British Medical Association is of opinion that further investigation of the capacity and development of the brain of the African is a matter of urgency. The Governments of East and Central Africa are requested to give the matter their earnest attention in view of the importance of the educational questions involved.

The "earnest attention" here referred to can be expressed most convincingly in terms of money; and it is to be hoped that the Governments concerned will see their way to giving grants commensurate with the magnitude and urgency of the research that has to be done.

## One Roman Catholic View

THESE few gems are culled from an article published in *G. K.'s Weekly* of February 1st in stern disapprobation of—among other things—the Brock Report, eugenists, scientists, committees in general, statisticians and medical witnesses. The article bears, very aptly, the heading "A Damp Squib."

"The Report is significant chiefly as an index to the utter unreliability of the scientist, even the honest scientist, when he approaches an inquiry with a preformulated conviction. The Committee reporting was a packed body, from which every representative of the distinguished scientific opposition to sterilization had been carefully excluded.

"Although a common nomenclature for categories of defect and disorder was generally accepted, the rules of classification followed by the various witnesses were widely diverse. With such primary factors of confusion as these operative, it is hardly surprising that the evidence on the far more complex, and in this inquiry vital, matter of

causation, should be so incoherent, self-contradictory and unconvincing as to be worthless to any impartial judgment.

"Although the witnesses could not make themselves coherent in words, they all came plentifully supplied with figures, and some fifty pages of the Report are devoted to the tabulation of statistics as futile and as meaningless as any that have ever appeared in blue book or white paper since ever the House of Hanover sat upon the Throne.

"It is not an exaggeration to say that had all the figure type in the appendices been jumbled up and re-set in the tables by a gang of tidy monkeys their relation to reality could hardly have been affected.

"Of all the nonsense and futility that is embodied in this monument of muddle-headedness, this is the part that stinks and crawls—the uncomfortable suspicion that the end and purpose of all the inquiry was to secure a few wretched half-men, without the sense or spirit to resist, as subjects for experiment, and as figures for future statistics."

### And Another

On the other hand, an article published in the *Catholic News* of February 3rd asserts that:

"Its [the Departmental Committee's] judgments are considered and its conclusions cautious; in fact the report is admirable for its absence of dogmatism on a matter still largely unexplored and of any tendency to trespass into the field of morality and religion. . . . The conclusions express the unanimous decision of the committee; and in the arguments on which they are based there is little or no evidence of crankiness or of patronizing interference in the lives of others. They are neither dominated by the bias of specialists nor the spirit which regards legislation, perhaps unconsciously, as class-exploitation."

We find it hard to resist the conclusion that *G. K.'s Weekly* and the *Catholic News* cannot both be right.

### Supervision of Contraceptives

At the thirteenth Annual Conference of the American Birth Control League, reported in the February issue of the *Birth Control Review*, preliminary steps were taken towards the creation of a body to sponsor and supervise the testing and standardization of contraceptive products. The proposal was set forth in the following resolution, which was also adopted by the American Conference on Birth Control and National Recovery in Washington:

Whereas there is a rapid increase in the sale of commercial contraceptives; and whereas contraception is essentially a medical problem, and contraceptives are medical supplies; and whereas under the present laws there is no possibility of official supervision of contraceptives: therefore be it resolved that immediate steps be taken to create a body composed of eminent physicians and scientists to sponsor and supervise the testing and standardization of all contraceptive products; that only one such body be established on a national or international basis; that all birth control organizations should join in supporting this central body; and that all birth control clinics begin as soon as possible to use only those products which have been approved by the central body.

In moving the second reading of his Bill "to restrict the sale, display and advertisement of contraceptives," Lord Dawson identified himself "with the view that the way of keeping the sale and use of contraceptives on sound lines is to remove that veil of doubt as to the honesty of contraception." He added that it was the fact that there was a doubt as to its cleanness and honesty which prevented honest traders from taking contraceptives into their trade, with the result that profits remained too large and the sale of contraceptives was retained in the hands of less scrupulous traders. It is difficult to imagine how the ends favoured by Lord Dawson could be secured more effectively than by the successful establishment of a body with the composition and functions of that described in the above resolution; or of a sadder commentary on his proposals than that these *positive* methods of dealing with the racket in contraceptives should have been elaborated in a land where similar restrictive legislation has been in force for many years with deplorable results.

### Vital Statistics in 1932

THE Registrar-General's Statistical Review\* for the year 1932, which was issued in January 1934, surveys the population, births, marriages and deaths in England and Wales for the period 1931 to 1932. The

\* *The Registrar-General's Statistical Review of England and Wales for the year 1932 (New Annual Series, No. 12), Part II. Civil.* H.M. Stationery Office, 1934. Price 2s.

population of England and Wales is now estimated to have passed the 40 million mark, having advanced at the middle of 1932 to 40,201,000 from the 1931 census figure of 39,952,377. During 1932 there were 613,972 registered births, a decrease of 18,109 on the previous year. The consequent birth rate—namely 15.3 per thousand of population—is the lowest recorded for England and Wales, being 0.5 below that for 1931 (the previous lowest), and 1.0 below that for 1930. The only other countries with a lower birth rate in 1932 were Sweden (13.5), Germany (15.1) and Austria (15.2). The proportion of the sexes in the births registered during the year was 1,050 males to 1,000 females, a higher ratio than any during the previous ten years.

### Lecture on Voluntary Sterilization

AN historical survey of this subject, covering in particular the events of the last twenty-five years which have brought the problem of sterilization into prominence, was made by Dr. C. P. Blacker in a lecture to the Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals at the School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Keppel Street, on February 26th. Lord Horder was in the chair. In the course of his remarks the speaker urged the Federation to base its policy on the recommendations of the Brock Committee, and not to go beyond this by demanding compulsory measures. Mr. Cecil Binney followed with a short address on the legal aspects of the problem; and Sir Robert Armstrong-Jones and Dr. Gibbons were among those who took part in the subsequent discussion.

### The "Sociological Review"

WITH its January issue the *Sociological Review* entered on a new phase of existence. For a quarter of a century it had been the only British quarterly devoted exclusively to sociology, and as such had earned high repute in all countries where this subject is studied. Now it has the added advantage of having secured for a period of years financial support which will enable the new Editorial

Board (consisting of Professor A. M. Carr-Saunders, Mr. Alexander Farquharson and Professor Morris Ginsberg) to make it into a journal that is fully representative of all aspects of sociological studies in Great Britain. The constitution of the Board warrants the hope that matters connected with eugenics will not be neglected, indeed will be scientifically and sympathetically discussed, in the new *Sociological Review*.

Among contributions to the current issue are an analysis of social class by T. H. Marshall, a survey of German sociology before the present régime by Morris Ginsberg, and a review by Lancelot Hogben of R. Kuczynski's *Fertility and Reproduction*.

### A Bookseller's List

THE catalogues issued by publishers and booksellers so seldom differentiate eugenics from general biology or sociology that an exception to the usual practice is worthy of mention in these columns. In a catalogue of books "Useful to the Study and Practice of Social Philosophy," issued by Bernard Quaritch Ltd., three pages are devoted to a category bearing the caption "Eugenics," with "Sterilization, Genetics and Mendelism" forming the sub-caption. The selection of works under this heading, though not comprehensive, has been made with considerable care and knowledge, the bibliographer having availed himself of the expert advice of the honorary librarian to this Society, Miss E. Corry. The list includes such classics as the *Works of Sir Francis Galton* and such recent publications as Mr. E. J. Lidbetter's *Heredity and the Social Problem Group*. An interesting item—to the extreme rarity of which the bibliographer draws attention—is a complete set of the *EUGENICS REVIEW* from the beginning in 1909 to 1932, forming Volumes I-XXV.

### The Galton Dinner

SIR HUMPHRY ROLLESTON presided over the gathering of 150 Fellows and Members of the Society and their guests who were present at the Galton Dinner on Thursday, February 16th, when Sir Josiah Stamp read

a characteristically erudite paper on "Eugenic Influences in Economics." Sir Basil Blackett moved, and Mr. Ralph Hawtrey seconded, a vote of thanks to the lecturer. Besides those mentioned the guests of the *Society* were Lady Stamp, Dr. E. C. Snow, Dr. W. H. Coates, Mr. S. P. Vivian, Mr. O. R. Hobson, Mr. E. C. Bewlay and Dr. W. Allen Daley. We have pleasure in announcing that Sir Josiah Stamp's paper will be published in full in our next issue.

### Dr. C. V. Drysdale

THE retirement of Dr. Drysdale from his appointment as Director of Scientific Research at the Admiralty has been the occasion of many tributes to his brilliant inventiveness in the field of electrical measurements and acoustics. In this REVIEW it is fitting to recall his services to eugenics and birth control. Although at the time fully occupied with his professional work, C. V. Drysdale took over the editorship of the *Malthusian* on the death of his father, Dr. C. R. Drysdale, in 1906. Soon after he conceived the idea that a great deal more might be learned from the columns of international vital statistics in the annual reports of the Registrar-General if these were represented diagrammatically; and, indeed, when these diagrams (the first of their kind) had been made for all the countries whose vital statistics were available, he found a parallelism between the birth rates and the death rates in long-settled countries which led him to enunciate a "law of correspondence" for populations pressing upon their means of subsistence. It may be added that most of the countries concerned had falling birth rates; in others the rates were fairly stationary.

The next product of his scanty leisure was a paper, *Eugenics and Neo-Malthusianism*, for the First International Eugenics Conference. In this he put forward the view that although birth control had acted dysgenically, and was still doing so, the only remedy was more birth control, in other words, the removal of restrictions which hindered the dissemination of birth control

knowledge and practice throughout the community. Quoting data which had been published in the EUGENICS REVIEW on the extraordinary improvement that had taken place in the physique of the Dutch people, he pointed out that in Holland the cause of birth control had been greatly forwarded by two cabinet ministers, who had co-operated in efforts to convey contraceptive advice and knowledge to people of the poorest classes. It is to be hoped that Dr. Drysdale will long continue to co-operate in the work of the *Eugenics Society*; and that he will add to the number of his valued contributions to this REVIEW.

BINNIE DUNLOP.

### National Baby Week

THE National Baby Week Council, which is concerned with cultivating and informing public opinion on matters connected with maternity and child welfare, draws our attention to the fact that this year it is concentrating its propaganda on a subject of special interest to this *Society*: "the making of an A.I. nation." To this end it is emphasizing the importance of laying the foundations of health in the ante-natal period, reminding parents of their responsibility for the type of life they bring into being, but at the same time not neglecting such environmental factors as good nutrition for expectant and nursing mothers and for infants in the early years of life. The Council directs this propaganda primarily to parents, but only in hardly less degree to other citizens, believing that measures for improving the quality of the nation are most likely to be successful when they command the support of well-informed and sympathetic public opinion.

### Erratum

THE attention of readers is drawn to the omission, in error, from the paragraph headed "Rural Peace" in the January REVIEW (p. 264), of the quotation mark that should have followed the penultimate sentence. The final sentence is our own commentary and not, as might appear, part of the quotation.